

August 20, 2024

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 6:00 p.m., with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, President; Albert H. Nickerson; and John F. Price. The meeting convened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Fithian asked everyone to remain silent to honor Robin Wood Kurowski. Ms. Kurowski was a Museum of Kent County member and a Kent County historian.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney, were also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved items one through four as presented:

1. Regular Session Minutes, August 13, 2024
2. Liquor Minutes, August 13, 2024
3. Chestertown Lions Club, Raffle Only, December 31, 2024
4. Chris Walmsley, Director of Office Administration, Kent County Public Library – FY2025 Cooperative Local-State Library Aid Programs Certification – Total County Contribution is \$793,960.00
5. Dan Mattson, Director of Public Works—Sewer Allocations Request Tax Map 51 Parcel 143, Lot 3. The allocations total \$23,600.00. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the request for two sewer allocations with a letter describing the processes that need to be accomplished before the applicant can utilize the allocations.

COUNTY ATTORNEY

Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney, reviewed the protocol for a legislative session. Robert Tracey, Associate Planner of Planning, Housing, and Zoning, joined Mr. Yeager in answering any questions the Board had regarding Code Home Rule Bill No.7-2024 Self-Storage Centers In The Industrial District.

Mr. Yeager summarized actions the Commissioners could consider during the legislative session. The legislative bills scheduled for a third read are presented at this meeting to be passed, rejected, amended, or deferred to a later date. No proposed amendments to either bill were received, and no written comments were received during the comment period. As for the bill scheduled for introduction, the Board could consider it for introduction or defer it to a later date.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to go into legislative session.

3rd Read and Vote – Code Home Rule Bill No. 5-2024 Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers

AN ACT concerning Chapter 120 Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland. FOR the purpose of clarifying definitions to not include a firearm purchased or sold in a transaction regulated by a federal firearms license. BY repealing Chapter 120 Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers and reenacting with amendments Chapter 120 Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers, Section 120-2 Definitions.

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Code Home Rule 5-2024 Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers.

3rd Read and Vote – Code Home Rule Bill No. 6-2024 Clean Energy Program Loan

AN ACT to amend Chapter 152 Taxation, Article VII Clean Energy Loan Program §§ 152- 30, 152-31, and 152-32 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland FOR THE PURPOSE of defining certain terms: establishing a Clean Energy Loan Program for commercial property owners; establishing the scope of and eligibility for the Clean Energy Loan Program; providing for qualifying criteria; establishing a calculation of the clean energy loan surcharge, providing for a recorded notice; providing for the collection of loan payments; establishing default procedures; providing for financing or refinancing of Qualifying Projects under the Clean Energy Loan Program; providing for the application of this Act; and generally related to the Clean Energy Loan Program and real property taxes as consistent with provisions and the authority of the Annotated State Code of Maryland, Local Government Article, §1-1102.

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Code Home Rule 6-2024 Clean Energy Program Loan.

Introduction of Code Home Rule Bill No.7-2024 Self-Storage Centers In The Industrial District

Mr. Tracey discussed Code Home Rule Bill No. 7-2024. This is a citizen-sponsored zoning text amendment. AN ACT to amend Chapter 222, Zoning, of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland, also known as the Kent County Land Use Ordinance, to add self-storage centers as a permitted use in the Industrial district by (a) amending Article V, District Regulations, Section 15. Industrial District, §15.2 Permitted Principal Uses and Structures, by adding a new #20, as follows: “Self-storage centers provided the front façade of the center and any other façade visible from adjoining public roads reflect the scale, materials, and design features common to residential or historic structures in the County. Self-storage centers are subject to site plan review;” (b) by amending Article V, District Regulations, Section 11. Commercial, §11.2 Permitted Principal Uses and Structures, by replacing #6 with: “Self-storage centers provided the front façade of the center and any other façade visible from adjoining public roads reflect the scale, materials, and design features common to residential or historic structures in the County. Self-storage centers are subject to site plan review;” and (c) by including a certain, non-codified provision to instruct County staff to make similar changes in

the upcoming re-adoption of the Land Use Ordinance. A letter dated July 17, 2024, from Joe Hickman, Chairman of Kent County Planning Commission (PC), was submitted for the Board's review. The PC offered a favorable recommendation on the amendment. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the introduction of Code Home Rule Bill 7-2024 and for the Bill to be scheduled and advertised for a public hearing.

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to adjourn the legislative session.

APPOINTMENT

Dr. Clifford P. Coppersmith, President, Karen Smith, Vice President for Administrative Services, and Dr. Dave Harper, Vice President for Workforce & Academic Programs, were present to discuss Workforce Programs. Chesapeake College shared program offerings and agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing updates. There is a lack of workforce in the trades: construction, plumbing, HVAC, electricians, and welding, to name a few, and Chesapeake College is addressing the need to build a workforce pipeline in these industry sectors. The more everyone understands and shares the training opportunities available in these industries, the better the individuals seeking to enter will maintain and advance their careers. The following Chesapeake College staff members gave a presentation: Professor Nicole Barth, Agricultural Program; Frank Williams, Advanced Manufacturing Program Coordinator; David Irby, Business and Industry Navigator; and David Timms, Director of Healthcare Simulation. Also in attendance were Brenda Shorter, Board of Trustee, and Erica Osterhout, Foundation Board of Directors member.

Following the July 30, 2024, meeting, Dr. Coppersmith continued discussing the Queen Anne's Technical Center - Revised Proposed Building Project. Chesapeake College needs a new technical building. The technology is outdated, and the spaces are inadequately sized. The programs housed in this building heavily benefit the trades, primarily where our local citizens receive such training. Chesapeake College has been in discussions with the State for funding. The State has prioritized this project and requests Letters of Intent from the five counties for the local share of funding. The project is approximately a \$56,000,000.00 initiative. The State would pay 75% of the project if the funding is approved. The local share is 25%. Kent County's local share is 11%, which equates to \$1,566,161.00. Chesapeake College has received support from Talbot and Queen Anne's counties thus far. Dr. Coppersmith requested Kent County's support. A support letter to Chesapeake College and the Letter of Intent to Daniel D. Schuster, Maryland Higher Education Commission, was offered for review and signatures. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved signing the Letter of Intent for the Queen Anne's Technical Center Renovation Project to indicate that Kent County will provide its share of funds to design, construct, and equip the technical center.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Jim Miller, Director of Human Resources, on behalf of the Office of Emergency Services, requested approval to fill three full-time Emergency Medical Technician vacancies. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidates.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Kent County Health Department - Shelley L. Heller, on behalf of William Webb, Health Officer, and Emily McCoy, Administrator, Kent County Health Department, discussed a revised funding agreement. The Board of Public Works enacted reductions to the FY2025 budget, including a Core Public Health Services appropriation reduction.

A revised FY2025 Core Funding Agreement for Kent County was submitted for approval. The agreement accounts for a \$385,135.00 total reduction in funding (both local and state). The original agreement accepted on June 25, 2024, was provided for comparison. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved signing the revised funding agreement for the Kent County Health Department. Further discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved sending a letter to Governor Wes Moore's office and a copy to the Maryland Department of Health expressing concerns about the lack of funding Kent County Health Department will receive.

Commissioner Nickerson advised that during the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Summer Conference, staff met with Paul J. Wiedefeld, Secretary for Maryland's Department of Transportation, and were advised that there is no funding available for Kent County.

LETTER FOR SIGNATURE

Melissa Walters was appointed to the Kent County Board of Library Trustees on July 23, 2024, to fill an unexpired term. The original letter contained a mistake: the wrong expiration date. A corrected letter was prepared for the Board to sign.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in effect. Comments were offered by: Davis Foster, Mayor of Chestertown, regarding Tax Differential; Jamie Williams, Director of Economic and Tourism Development, reflected upon Chesapeake College's presentation this evening; Dick Story, Chair of the Economic and Tourism Development Commission (ETD), shared plans for municipal discussions on tourism and business development during the next ETD meeting.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

On July 26, 2024, the Commissioners received a letter from John A. Moritz of Townsend, Delaware, advising the County that he has applied for a Permit to Appropriate and Use Waters of the State, which has been assigned permit application number KE2023G002/01 on property adjacent to County owned property. The project is located at 34351 Cypress Road, Millington. A copy of the letter was available for review.

On August 12, 2024, the Commissioners received a letter from Robin Davenport, Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children. Ms. Davenport thanked the Commissioners for the FY2025 financial allocation. The letter was available for review.

On August 9, 2024, Will Albright, the Property Manager at KRM Development Corporation, sent a letter to the Commissioners informing them that the lease for the Kent Family Center will expire on October 31, 2024. Mr. Albright wanted input concerning a plan for renewal. The letter was available for review.

On August 9, 2024, Harris P. Murphy, County Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court for Kent County, sent a letter to the Commissioners requesting approval to replace the Courthouse's outdated access control system (security system). The letter and its enclosures were available for review. Commissioner Price commented on the request, and Ms. Heller reported coordination efforts with the Kent County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Public Works.

On July 24, 2024, the Commissioners received a letter from Deborah Hudson Vornbrock, Executive Director of Martin's House & Barn. Ms. Vornbrock thanked the Commissioners for the FY2025 financial allocation. The letter was available for review.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS

The Commissioners were provided with a copy of the ARPA Spend Plan outlining the approved expenditures to date for informational purposes.

CONTINGENCY FUND

The FY2025 Contingency balance as of August 13, 2024, is \$373,850.00. The FY2025 use of Fund Balance is \$23,153.00.

At 7:27 p.m., on a motion made by Commissioner Nickerson and seconded by Commissioner Price, the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Regular Session Minutes
August 20, 2024
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Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland

August 20, 2024

The Board of License Commissioners met today with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, presiding, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney, were also present.

CONSENT ITEM

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved Consent Item #2 - Liquor Minutes, August 13, 2024.

SPECIAL CLASS C LICENSES

Kent Cultural Alliance submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor during the Chestertown Jazz Festival. The event is scheduled for September 7, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Wilmer Park in Chestertown. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for Kent Cultural Alliance.

The Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company (RHVFC) has submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for approval. The RHVFC intends to sell beer, wine, and liquor during the Team Grant Fundraiser they are hosting on September 7, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for the Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company.

Sgt. Preston Ashley, American Legion Auxiliary, has submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for approval. The Auxiliary intends to sell beer only during the annual Bike Fest at the Rock Hall Bulkhead on September 8, 2024, from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. In case of rain, the event will be rescheduled for September 15, 2024. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for Sgt. Preston Ashley American Legion Auxiliary.

Kent Cultural Alliance has submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor during a Block Party featuring a DJ and food trucks. The event is scheduled for October 5, 2024, from 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at Park Row in Chestertown. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for Kent Cultural Alliance.

The Kent Association of Riding Therapy, Inc. (KART) has submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer and wine during the KART Gala (Square

Dance) event. The event is scheduled for October 26, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at Worthmore Equestrian Center in Worton. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for Kent Association of Riding Therapy, Inc.

Each application was reviewed, and no objections were raised before the Board voted on each application.

At 7:27 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Nickerson, seconded by Commissioner Price; the Commissioners unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

THE BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk/KATE Manager

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland